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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/706,914	11/14/2003	Tsutomu Okabe	245161US3 CIP	7655
22850 7590 08/10/2007 OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			EXAMINER MOORE, KARLA A	
			ART UNIT 1763	PAPER NUMBER
			NOTIFICATION DATE 08/10/2007	DELIVERY MODE ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/706,914

Applicant(s)

OKABE ET AL.

Examiner

Karla Moore

Art Unit

1763

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 June 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7,9 and 10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7,9 and 10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>0507</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 2-7 and 9-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
3. Claims 2 and 4 each recite the limitation "the lid held by the door has been inserted into said *first opening* to close". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. Examiner has assumed that the italicized portion of the phrase was meant to read "said first opening portion".
4. Claim 5 recites the limitation "a wall on which said first opening portion is formed". Examiner has assumed that the phrase was intended to be "the wall on which said first opening portion is formed".
5. Claim 6 recites the limitation "*to the* first opening portion is formed". Examiner has assumed that the "the wall on which" was mean to be inserted between the words "to" and "the".
6. Claim 7 recites the limitations "clean box has a tab..." and "*the* surface extending outside from the opening of the clean box" and "a surface of the tab". Examiner has assumed that the phrases were meant to read "wherein the tab is provided at the periphery of the opening of the clean box", "a surface extending outside from the opening of the clean box" and "the surface of the tab", respectively.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

8. Claims 1-7 and 9-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,530,736 to Rosenquist et al.

9. Rosenquist et al. disclose a wafer processing system best illustrated by Figs. 4, 6A and 6B, including a mini-environment portion (28) having a chamber therein and configured to transfer a wafer clean box (20) having a housing with an opening configured to be closed by a lid (22) to house the wafer in the housing and the chamber, wherein the housing has a tab extending outside from the opening of the clean box around an entire perimeter of the opening, said apparatus comprising: a first opening portion (106) formed on the wall (102) of the chamber, for communicating with an outside of the chamber, the wall opposing the opening of the clean box which allows loading and unloading of the wafer between the clean box and the chamber, wherein when the wafer transferring operation is performed, the clean box is fixed to overlap the tab of the clean box over an outside surface of the wall on which the first opening portion is formed with a first clearance (a clearance extending between vertically aligned

surfaces of the clean box and the first opening portion) formed around the entire perimeter of said first opening portion, and wherein the first clearance is defined by a predetermined constant distance along an entire perimeter of the opening of the clean box between a surface of the tab and the outside surface wall on which the first opening portion is formed.

10. With respect to claim 2, the apparatus further comprises a door (104) capable of closing the first opening portion when the wafer is not transferred and opening the first opening portion when the wafer is transferred, wherein when the lid held by the door has been inserted into said first opening portion to close said first opening portion until the door has closed the first opening portion a second clearance (a clearance extending between vertically aligned surfaces of the door and the first opening portion—see blown up portion of Figures 6A and 6B) is formed between the door and a perimeter of said first opening, the second clearance communicating with the second clearance, wherein and an inside of the chamber is capable of communicating with an outside of the chamber through the first and second clearances.

11. With respect to claim 3, the second clearance is capable of communicating with the first clearance to form a gas flow path from the chamber to the outside of the chamber. See Figures 6A and 6B.

12. With respect to claim 4, each of the limitations is addressed above.

13. With respect to claim 5, the first clearance extends between the tab and the wall on which said first opening portion is formed in a direction of the wall on which the first opening portion is formed. See Figures 6A and 6B.

14. With respect to claim 6, the first clearance also extends in a direction perpendicular to the wall on which the first opening portion is formed (i.e. the clearance has both vertical and horizontal measurements).

15. With respect to claim 7, the tab is provided at the periphery of the opening of the clean box, and a surface extending outside from the opening of the clean box is the surface of the tab. See Figures 6A and 6B.

16. With respect to claims 9 and 10, the second clearance extends within said first opening portion around an entire perimeter of said first opening portion along a direction in which said door opens. See Figures 4 and 6A and 6B.

Response to Arguments

17. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-7 and 9-10 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

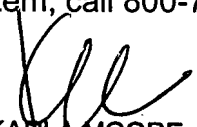
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Karla Moore whose telephone number is 571.272.1440. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9:00 am-6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Parviz Hassanzadeh can be reached on 571.272.1435. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1763

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



KARLA MOORE
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Art Unit 1763
6 August 2007